

UNNUMBERED LETTERS ISSUED FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2006

Dated	Subject	Distribution
08/1/06	Management and Applicant Satisfaction Surveys	N.O.O. & S/D
08/2/06	Compliance Review-- Rules Governing Equal Treatment of Faith-Based and Community Organizations, Re-Issue: Replaces Letter Dated May 5, 2006	All RD Employees
08/4/06	Guaranteed Loan System Points of Contact	S/D
08/07/06	Interest Rate Changes for Housing Programs and Credit Sales (Nonprogram)	S/D
08/9/06	Extension of Effective Period of Existing Area Loan Limits Section 502 Direct	S/D
8/15/06	RD Instruction 2033-A, "Records Management Rural Development Field Offices	S/D
8/18/06	Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program National Office Reserve Fiscal Year 2006	S/D
	Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program National Office Reserve Fiscal Year 2006 Funding Selections	S/D
	State Business Programs Director's/General Field Representatives' Responsibilities for Administration of Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program	
8/28/06	Guaranteed Rural Housing Program Obligation without Appraisal	S/D
8/29/06	Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Data Report and Public Outreach Report	S/D

8/29/06

Purging of Paper-Based Official Personnel Folders in N.O.O. & S/D
preparation for the Electronic Official Personnel
Folder Initiative

August 1, 2006

SUBJECT: Management and Applicant Satisfaction Surveys

TO: National Office Officials
Rural Development State Directors

ATTN: Administrative Program Directors
Human Resources Managers

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recently announced the release of the Management Satisfaction Survey and the Applicant Satisfaction Survey. These surveys were developed by the Chief Human Capital Officers Council in support of Government-wide efforts to support key "Proud To Be" objectives for our strategic human capital management initiatives.

All hiring officials will be asked to complete a Management Satisfaction Survey, on line, each time a selection is made. The survey questions address satisfaction with the job announcement; resume contents; applicant quality and quantity; and the availability of hiring flexibilities.

The applicants will be asked to complete an Applicant Satisfaction Survey, which is currently available to applicants through the USAJOBS Federal Employment Information System. The survey targets applicant satisfaction with the job announcement; resume building process; application storage and retrieval process; and job search capability.

Effective immediately, all human resources staff should distribute the attached Management Satisfaction Survey Form with each Certificate of Eligibles. OPM has requested that we establish a baseline by **August 31, 2006**, which will be used to set targets and identify strategies for improving hiring processes. All Management Satisfaction Survey Forms should be faxed to Norma Valdes at 202-692-0267 by **August 28, 2006**, for reporting purposes. In the future a quarterly data call will go out requesting the forms.

EXPIRATION DATE:
July 31, 2007

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

In **January 2007**, OPM will be preparing and distributing individual agency and government-wide data on a quarterly basis. In turn, OPM has requested that we submit a report documenting the results in meeting our targets on or before **June 29, 2007**.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Norma Valdes, Human Resources Specialist, at 202-692-0198 or via e-mail at norma.valdes@wdc.usda.gov.

(Signed by Sherie Hinton Henry)

SHERIE HINTON HENRY
Deputy Administrator
for Operations and Management

Attachment

Sent by electronic mail on August 3, 2006 at 7:30 am by Human Resources.
State Directors and National Office Officials should advise other personnel as appropriate.

MANAGEMENT SATISFACTION SURVEY FORM

(Print on Agency Stationary and attach to Certificate of Eligibles)

FROM: (Human Resource Manager/Specialist)

Agency:

TO: (Agency Hiring Official)

SUBJECT: Chief Human Capital Officers Council Management Satisfaction Survey

Vacancy Number: _____

The Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCO) Council has developed a survey to obtain managers' perceptions of the hiring process at their agencies. This is another step in making meaningful improvements in our agency and the Federal Government's hiring processes. The survey focuses on both the quality of candidates certified for hiring and the hiring flexibilities available to selecting officials. Data from this survey will be used to help us meet our agency's hiring objectives.

I am requesting each of our hiring officials take the following actions for every certificate issued to them:

1. Complete the survey located at

<http://study.opm.gov/mss/>

This should take five minutes or less.

2. Verify that you have completed this survey by signing and dating this memo in the space below and returning it to the issuing human resources office along with the completed certificate.

Hiring Official

Date

August 2, 2006

SUBJECT: Compliance Review
Rules Governing Equal Treatment of Faith-Based and Community
Organizations
Re-Issue: Replaces Letter Dated May 5, 2006

TO: All Rural Development Employees

As part of his Faith-Based and Community Initiative, President Bush issued Executive Order (EO) 13279, Equal Protection of the Laws for Faith-Based and Community Organizations. EO 13279 charges executive branch agencies to give equal treatment to faith-based and community groups that apply for Federal funds to meet social needs in America's communities. The EO was implemented by USDA on July 9, 2004, with the publication of an implementing regulation entitled, "Equal Opportunity for Religious Organizations" (7 CFR Part 16). This regulation requires compliance monitoring. Form RD 400-8, "Compliance Review," will be used to monitor compliance with all applicable civil rights laws, rules, and regulations under the program in which the loan or grant is being made (regular oversight duties).

The trained compliance review official will ensure that the recipient does NOT:

- 1.) Discriminate against a program beneficiary (user/participant) or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious beliefs. Such discrimination might include requiring beneficiaries to participate in religious activities or subscribe to the recipient's religious beliefs as a condition of the beneficiary's receipt of Federally funded services and/or benefits.
- 2.) Engage in inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization (preaching), as part of the programs or services supported with direct USDA assistance. An organization may still conduct such activities, however, they must be privately funded; (b) offered separately, in time OR location from the programs or services supported with USDA Rural Development Federal financial assistance; and (c) be voluntary for beneficiaries of the Federal programs or services.

EXPIRATION DATE:
August 31, 2007

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

- 3.) Lose its religious hiring autonomy as a condition of participating in USDA Rural Development programs. Faith-based organizations are generally exempt from the Federal prohibition on “discrimination on the basis of religion” in their hiring practices as set forth in section 702(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C., 2000e-1. This exemption is not forfeited by their receipt of Rural Development assistance. However, they are not exempt from discrimination against beneficiaries on the prohibited bases of race, color, nation origin, or sex as set forth in 7 CFR Sec. 16, 16.2(c).

All organizations must submit a complete application package under the Rural Development program for which they are applying. If Form RD 400-1, “Equal Opportunity Agreement,” is required as part of the application package, it must be submitted. Faith-based organizations are exempt from the “prohibited discrimination on the basis of religion in hiring practices” clause.

- 4.) Use funds for acquisition, construction or rehabilitation of structures to the extent those structures are used for inherently religious activities (such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization). Where a structure is used for both eligible and inherently religious activities, direct USDA Rural Development funds may not exceed the cost of those portions of the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation that are attributable to eligible activities in accordance with the cost accounting requirements applicable to USDA funds. Religious congregations may not receive USDA Rural Development funds for improvements to sanctuaries, chapels, or any other room that the congregation uses as its principal place of worship, even if the room is used for eligible activities during non-worship times.

A recipient faith-based organization MAY:

- 1.) Use direct USDA Rural Development Federal financial assistance only to support the non-inherently religious activities/services it provides;
- 2.) Retain its identity, including its religious name and/or mission statement;
- 3.) Select its board members and otherwise govern itself on a religious basis;
- 4.) Retain religious art, icons, scripture, or other religious symbols on its property, including those facilities in which a Federally funded service is provided;
- 5.) Include religious references in its organizations mission statements and other governing document; and

- 6.) Retain its ability to take religion into account when hiring its employees as part of its religious independence and autonomy.

Civil Rights compliance reviews for faith-based and community organization recipients are to follow the requirements of RD Instruction 1901-E, 1901.204, which will provide program specific guidance on completing reviews.

Please feel free to contact Carlton L. Lewis, Program Compliance, Civil Rights Staff, at (202) 692-0097, or carlton.lewis@wdc.usda.gov, or Rhonda Brown, Rural Development Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Coordinator, at (202) 692-0298, or rhonda.brown@wdc.usda.gov, if you have additional questions.

(Signed by Sherie Hinton Henry)

SHERIE HINTON HENRY
Deputy Administrator
for Operations and Management

Sent by electronic mail on 8/3/06 at 8:50AM by the Office of the Deputy Administrator for Operations and Management.

August 4, 2006

SUBJECT: Guaranteed Loan System
 Points of Contact

TO: State Directors
 Rural Development

ATTN: Business and Cooperative Program Directors

This unnumbered letter identifies the contact individuals concerning problems or questions on the Guaranteed Loan System (GLS). As of August 1, 2006, William Smith and Diane Berger will no longer be the primary points of contact for GLS for field questions.

The following individuals will be the primary points of contacts concerning GLS issues:

Sylvia Neal – Contact for National Office reporting, address all GLS report related issues, and provide support in the absence of Maria Cartagena or Andrea Patterson.

Phone # - (202) 720-2811

Email Address: sylvia.neal@wdc.usda.gov.

Maria Cartagena – Contact for the Specialty Lenders Division

Phone # - (202) 720-2383

Email Address: maria.cartagena@wdc.usda.gov

Andrea Patterson – Contact for the Business and Industry Division

Phone # - (202) 205-2460

Email Address: andrea.patterson@wdc.usda.gov

These individuals are committed to responding to the field's phone calls or E-mails within the same business day acknowledging receipt of the question and/or problem. Most issues can be resolved within the day of receipt. However, there may be complex issues requiring research and/or assistance from other sources. In this situation, they will inform the person either by phone or E-mail indicating the need for additional time to research the issue.

EXPIRATION DATE:
August 1, 2007

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Business and Cooperative Programs

They will work closely with William Smith and Diane Berger during this transition. If at anytime these three individuals are not available, you may contact William Smith or Diane Berger. Should you have any questions, please contact this office.

(Signed by William F. Hagy III)

WILLIAM F. HAGY III
Deputy Administrator
Business and Cooperative Programs

August 7, 2006

SUBJECT: Interest Rate Changes for Housing Programs
and Credit Sales (Nonprogram)

TO: Rural Development State Directors,
Rural Development Managers,
and Area Directors

ATTN: Rural Housing Program Director

The following interest rates, effective September 1, 2006, are changed as follows:

<u>Loan Type</u>	<u>Existing Rate</u>	<u>New Rate</u>
ALL LOAN TYPES		
Treasury Judgement Rate	5.270%	5.170%

The new rate shown above is as of the week ending July 28, 2006. The actual judgement rate that will be used will be the rate for the calendar week preceding the date the defendant becomes liable for interest. This rate may be found by going to the Federal Reserve web site for the weekly average 1-year Constant Maturity Treasury yield (http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/h15/data/Weekly_Friday_H15_TCMNOM_Y1.txt).

RURAL HOUSING LOANS

Rural Housing (RH) 502		
Low or Moderate	6.250	6.250

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2006

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

Single Family Housing (SFH) Nonprogram	6.750	6.750
Rural Housing Site (RH-524), Non-Self-Help	6.250	6.250
Rural Rental Housing and Rural Cooperative Housing	6.250	6.250

Please notify appropriate personnel of these rates.

(Signed by David J. Villano) for

RUSSELL T. DAVIS
Administrator
Housing & Community Facilities Programs

Sent by Electronic Mail on 8/8/06 at 9:35 a.m. by PAD.

August 9, 2006

TO: State Directors
Rural Development

ATTN: Rural Housing Program Directors

FROM: David J. Villano (Signed by David J. Villano)
Deputy Administrator
Single Family Housing

SUBJECT: Extension of Effective Period of Existing Area Loan Limits
Section 502 Direct

On June 22, 2006, a memorandum was issued informing States that the timeframe for the annual loan limit review will be moved to the second quarter to alleviate end-of-year workloads, synchronize our loan limit release with that of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and reduce the need to revise limits throughout the year.

Given that HUD will issue their updated mortgage limits in January of 2007. The National Office will acquire and distribute the FY 2007 residential cost figures in mid-December, States will be required to submit their proposed area loan limit updates for prior approval by mid-January, and the loan limits will be effective in mid-February.

Since the State Instructions announcing the FY 2006 area loan limits are due to expire on September 30, 2006, you are hereby authorized to extend the effective period of the existing limits to February 16, 2007, without the need to submit the announcement to the National Office for approval.

If you have any questions regarding this memorandum, please contact Brooke Baumann of the Single Family Housing Direct Loan Division at (202) 690-4250.

EXPIRATION DATE:
February 28, 2007

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Housing Programs

August 15, 2006

TO: State Directors
Rural Development

ATTENTION: Program Directors
Single Family Housing

FROM: David J. Villano (*Signed by David J. Villano*)
Deputy Administrator
Single Family Housing

SUBJECT: RD Instruction 2033-A, "Records Management in Rural
Development Field Offices"

Rural Development Instructions on records management and filing and the Operational Records Manual have not been revised since 1997. Filing and retention requirements for documents have had numerous changes that have not been updated in the Instructions or the records manual causing confusion for the field offices on the correct position for filing in the borrower file. Therefore this unnumbered letter is issued for guidance on filing documents in applicant/borrower case files until the revised RD Instruction 2033-A is issued.

RD Instruction 2033-A, "Records Management in Rural Development Field Offices," addresses retention and removal of documents in "active" borrower case files. The Instructions have been revised to correct some of the inconsistencies with filing and retention requirements and are in the clearance process with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The current Exhibit A is being removed to allow the individual Agencies freedom with filing according to the Agency needs.

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2007

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Housing Programs

Our Operations Records Manual dated March 1997 is our Operational Records filing guide and records retention and will be used until the new RD Instruction 2033-A is published.

Since the current RD Instruction 2033-A, Exhibit A, will no longer be available, the Single Family Housing (SFH) Direct Loan Division has been given advance permission to determine filing positions within loan dockets. The new 502/504 SFH Loan and Grant Checklists released June 21, 2006, on PN 399 reflect these new filing positions.

If you have any questions, please contact Gale Richardson of the Single Family Housing Direct Loan Division at (202) 720-1459.

August 18, 2006

SUBJECT: Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program
National Office Reserve
Fiscal Year 2006

TO: State Directors, Rural Development

ATTN: Business Programs Directors

We have recently completed the National Office Reserve funding cycle. The National Office received 75 requests totaling \$10,583,263. We are pleased to announce that 41 of the requests were selected for funding. Due to the carry-over of \$833,411 from prior year funds, all 41 projects were fully funded. They are as follows:

State	Applicant	Amount Awarded
IA	City of Keokuk	\$99,000
GA	Johnson County Board of Commissioners	\$99,999
MN	City of Badger	\$99,999
OK	City of Sallisaw	\$99,950
CA	West Hills Community College District	\$99,500
NH	Belknap County Economic Development Council (BCEDC)	\$90,000
NE	Hamilton County Information Technology Corporation	\$99,999
WY	Converse County Care Center, Inc.	\$23,600
OR	Rural Development Initiatives, Inc.	\$198,000
VA	Scott County Economic Development Authority	\$135,500
UT	Utah State University	\$78,854
PA	The ARC of Northumberland County	\$99,500
AK	Alaska Office of Economic Development	\$95,000
ID	City of Burley	\$99,000
ME	Van Buren, Town of	\$99,900
AL	Lowndes County Commission	\$120,000
WV	Fairmont Community Development Partnership	\$100,000
NC	Town of Princeton	\$75,000

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2006

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Community/Business Programs

State	Applicant	Amount Awarded
VT	Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB)	\$200,000
TN	Tennessee Technological University	\$300,000
SC	South Carolina Office of Rural Health	\$98,368
IL	City of Princeton	\$99,000
HI	Hawaii County Economic Opportunity Council	\$12,000
SD	Grow Spink, Inc.	\$24,500
ND	City of Mountain	\$279,430
WI	Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.	\$98,000
MO	City of Norwood	\$94,500
CO	Grand County Business and Economic Development Association (BEDA)	\$50,000
KS	Beverly Community Economic Development, Inc.	\$70,000
MT	Snowy Mountain Development Corporation	\$50,000
MD	Maryland Hawk Corporation	\$500,000
AR	Main Street Dumas	\$49,900
NJ	City of Wildwood	\$99,000
WA	King County	\$93,990
KY	Murray State University	\$198,771
WP	Guam Economic Development & Commerce Authority	\$50,000
OH	Upper Valley Joint Vocational School	\$90,000
MS	Warren County Board of Supervisors	\$650,000
NM	New Mexico Rural Response Council	\$200,000
FL	Town of Havana	\$45,500
MA	Western Massachusetts Enterprise Fund, Inc.	35,000
	Total	\$5,200,760

This completely depletes the National Office Reserve account for fiscal year 2006. All projects must have an obligation date of no later than September 30, 2006. Thank you for your continued support in administering the Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program.

(Signed by William F. Hagy III)

WILLIAM F. HAGY III
Deputy Administrator
Business Programs

August 18, 2006

SUBJECT: Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program
National Office Reserve
Fiscal Year 2006 Funding Selections

TO: State Directors, Rural Development

ATTN: Business Programs Directors

We have recently completed the funding cycle for the National Office Reserve. There was \$1,323,001 available for this cycle. There were 78 requests for funds totaling \$3,685,204. We are pleased to announce that the following requests were selected for a funding total of \$1,323,001.

<u>State</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Amount</u>
ME	Washington Hancock Community Agency	\$50,000
WI	Heart of Wisconsin Community Incubator	\$48,000
AL	Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Inc.	\$45,712
NC	Upper Coastal Plains Development Corporation	\$50,000
KS	Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC)	\$36,000
IA	M & M Divide Resource Conservation and Development, Inc.	\$50,000
UT	Price Municipal Corporation	\$26,100
SD	Planning and Development District III	\$50,000
LA	Tangipahoa Parish Government	\$50,000
NE	Wayne Area Economic Development, Inc. (WAEDI)	\$46,810
OR	National Association of State Energy Officials	\$150,000
ID	State of Idaho, Department of Commerce and Labor	\$25,000
OK	Rural Enterprises, Inc.	\$36,749
ID	Fremont County	\$125,000

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FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Community/Business Programs

WV	Great Kanawha Resource Conservation and Development Area	\$50,000
VT	Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA)	\$41,000
ND	Cavalier County Job Development Authority	\$43,120
MN	Northwest Community Action, Inc.	\$50,000
NH	Northern Community Investment Corporation	\$49,000
MO	Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments	\$25,150
OR	Oregon Economic Development Association	\$50,000
MT	Richland County Health Department	\$10,000
NJ	Borough of Wrightstown	\$50,000
NM	Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation	\$47,360
WA	Makah Cultural and Research Center	\$50,000
OR	Seafood Consumer Center	\$18,000
AR	University of Arkansas Winthrop Rockefeller Center	\$50,000

\$1,323,001

All applications remaining on the National Office Reserve list will be removed. Your efforts and continued support for the Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program is appreciated.

(Signed by William F. Hagy III)

WILLIAM F. HAGY III
Deputy Administrator
Business Programs

August 18, 2006

SUBJECT: State Business Programs Director's/General Field Representatives'
Responsibilities for Administration of Rural Economic Development Loan and
Grant Program

TO: State Directors, Rural Development

ATTENTION: Program Directors
General Field Representatives

The Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) program is administered by Rural Development Business Programs on behalf of customers made eligible for the program as a result of their participation, or eligibility for participation, in the Rural Development Utilities Programs loans. Since the primary users of the program are rural electric cooperatives and the General Field Representatives (GFRs) are in frequent communication with the cooperatives, we believe the GFRs are in a position to stimulate more interest in using the program to enhance economic development activity in rural areas.

This unnumbered letter is sent to advise staff of the shared responsibilities in appropriately delivering the REDLG program.

The GFRs, in addition to Rural Development Business Programs will be responsible for marketing the benefits of the program with cooperatives, and, when necessary, assisting the cooperatives or Rural Development Business Programs staff with completion of applications. Rural Development Business Programs will rely on the GFRs for any verification of eligibility that may be required. Rural Development Business Programs will continue to administer the program in terms of accepting, processing, underwriting, and funding applications and servicing existing borrower accounts.

The GFRs will perform utilities analyses, perform REDLG reviews on borrower utilities and perform annual reviews of REDLG participant audits and will provide copies of review and audit results to the appropriate Rural Development State Office Program Director.

EXPIRATION DATE:
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FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Community/Business Programs

Rural Development Utilities Programs will continue to use the GFRs to perform Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) compliance reviews on electric or telecommunications borrowers and submit copies of the findings to the appropriate Rural Development State Office Program Director. Rural Development Business Programs will, through its State Office Program Director, notify the GFRs when such a compliance review is necessary. In addition, Rural Development Business Programs will assist with the gathering of EEO data from those organizations operating a revolving loan fund under the REDLG program.

Rural Development State Office personnel and Rural Development Utilities Programs' GFRs will work closely together to ensure high quality customer service and sound program management. This will include the sharing of information with each other such as audits, reports, and other such items that may be of use to both offices.

If you have any questions, please contact Jody Raskind, Director, Specialty Lenders Division, at (202) 720-1394.

(Signed by James M. Andrew)

JAMES M. ANDREW

Administrator

Utilities Programs

(Signed by Jackie J. Gleason)

Acting Administrator

Business and Cooperative Programs

August 28, 2006

TO: All State Directors
Rural Development

ATTENTION: Rural Housing Program Directors,
Guaranteed Rural Housing Specialist,
Rural Development Managers, and
Community Development Managers

FROM: Russell T. Davis (*Signed by Russell T.Davis*)
Administrator
Housing and Community Facilities Programs

SUBJECT: Guaranteed Rural Housing Program
Obligation without Appraisal

The purpose of this unnumbered letter is to permit obligations of Guaranteed Rural Housing (GRH) loans without appraisals in order to facilitate the processing of these loans.

A priority should be given to obligating all eligible GRH loans packages that have outstanding loan reservations issued by the Agency by September 30, 2006. While Fiscal Year 2006 funding may be carried over into Fiscal Year 2007 for obligation then, the timeliness of the availability of the carry over monies can not be predicted exactly. There will likely be a delay in funds availability after September 30, 2006 as the transition to the new fiscal year progresses. Lenders who are processing GRH loans during the September 2006 time frame may have difficulty in obtaining appraisals in time in order to ensure approval and obligation of their GRH loans prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Loans must be entered into the Guaranteed Loan System (GLS) for obligation by close of business on Friday, September 29, 2006 in order to be eligible for funding with this fiscal year's funds.

On a temporary basis, it is authorized to approve the obligation of GRH loans without an appraisal. Under this policy, the Agency may accept an application for a GRH loan from an

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FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Housing Programs

eligible lender without the appraisal. This authorization will be effective for all GRH loan packages received by the Agency after September 1, 2006 and will continue until the end of Fiscal Year 2006. The Agency will review the application package just as it would any other package, except for the appraisal. If the application meets all of the other requirements, the Agency may obligate funds subject to obtaining an appraisal that supports the loan request.

This authority is not intended to circumvent any of the GRH loan program requirements. The "Conditional Commitment for Single Family Housing Loan Guarantee" issued to the lender will contain the following language:

This commitment is contingent upon the lender providing an appraisal that meets the requirements of RD Instruction 1980-D, §1980.334 and satisfactory review of the appraisal. Final acceptance of the appraisal by this Agency is required before the lender closes the loan.

All loans obligated must meet all eligibility criteria. Before the "Loan Note Guarantee" can be issued, the appraisal must be obtained and reviewed by the Agency in the manner prescribed in RD Instruction 1980-D, section 980.334.

Questions regarding this unnumbered letter may be directed to the Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Division, at (202) 720-1452.

August 29, 2006

SUBJECT: Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Data Report and
Public Outreach Report

TO: Rural Development State Directors

ATTN: Faith-Based and Community Initiative Coordinator/Alternate
Administrative Program Directors

This is a request to enter all August Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (FBCI) reporting data into the web based system by close of business on Friday, September 8, 2006. This request is made to accomplish the Rural Development report due date to the Department and White House of September 12, 2006. Please plan accordingly to assure meeting the September 8, 2006, reporting date, which will allow us time to make any corrections/additions to the system prior to our September 12, 2006, submission.

The FBCI Public Outreach report for August is also due September 8, 2006. Your efforts to ensure accurate and timely information for the Department and White House FBCI Reports are greatly appreciated.

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2006

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Rhonda Brown, FBCI Coordinator, at (202) 692-0298, or e-mail rhonda.brown@wdc.usda.gov.

(Signed by Sherie Hinton Henry)

SHERIE HINTON HENRY
Deputy Administrator
for Operations and Management

Sent by electronic mail on 8/30/06 at 11:49am by the Office of the Deputy Administrator for Operations and Management.

State Directors shall notify other employees as appropriate.

August 29, 2006

SUBJECT: Purging of Paper-Based Official Personnel Folders in preparation for the Electronic Official Personnel Folder initiative

TO: National Office Officials
Rural Development State Directors

ATTN: Administrative Program Directors
Human Resources Managers

As Rural Development moves forward in the Electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) initiative, it is critical that all paper-based Official Personnel Folders (OPFs) be reviewed and purged of any extraneous materials. Purging of paper-based OPFs is critical to ensure cost-effective scanning of documents into the eOPF established for each employee.

Temporary documents removed from the OPF should be filed in a General Human Resources (HR) File developed for each employee. Any other materials removed or purged from the OPF should be either (1) filed in the HR General File; or (2) returned to the employee. This decision is to be made at the local level. The task of purging paper-based OPFs is to be conducted by Human Resources employees at each location, and must be completed no later than **January 31, 2007.**

When purging paper-based OPFs, refer to the document requirements and instructions contained in the Office of Personnel Management's Guide to Personnel Recordkeeping. The Guide to Personnel Recordkeeping can be located at the following link:
<http://www.opm.gov/feddata/persdoc.asp>.

In instances where required documents are missing from OPFs (i.e., SF-50s, insurance elections, insurance waivers, etc.), Human Resources offices are required to obtain and file missing/required documents in the paper-based OPF.

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FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

Effective immediately, the I-9 "Employee Eligibility Verification" form is no longer to be maintained in the OPF. All I-9 forms are to be removed from the OPF and placed in a separate tickler folder. The tickler folder is to be maintained and purged in accordance with the instructions contained on the I-9 form.

Also, as a reminder, effective ***pay period 14***, and until further notice, all Notifications of Personnel Actions (SF-50s) are **not** to be filed in employee's OPFs. Effective pay period 14, all SF-50s are being automatically transmitted to the employee's established eOPF from the National Finance Center.

Human Resources Offices are reminded to hold the SF-50s effective pay period 14 and later, in a secure location until additional instructions are released by the National Office. Please refer to the unnumbered letter sent out on July 14, 2006, for specific instructions. However, if an employee leaves Rural Development for a position in an agency not currently serviced by eOPF, those SF-50s stored in a secure location must be filed or placed in the paper-based OPF before transferring the folder to the gaining agency.

Please notify Ginger Holmes, Human Resources Specialist via e-mail at: Ginger.Holmes@wdc.usda.gov, that your location has completed the task of OPF purging.

Additional information on the eOPF initiative will be furnished to all offices as soon as it becomes available. We thank you for your continued support and cooperation in this government-wide mandated initiative.

If you should have any questions or concerns please contact Julie Wilson, Human Resources Manager, Illinois State Office, at (217) 403-6204, or Montsie Yarborough, Human Resources Manager, South Carolina State Office at (803) 253-3993.

(Signed by Sherie Hinton Henry)

SHERIE HINTON HENRY
Deputy Administrator
for Operations and Management

Sent by electronic mail on 8/31/06 at 10:30am pm by Human Resources.
State Directors and National Office Officials will notify other personnel as appropriate.